

LONG ISLAND FORUM



New York State Historical Marker at the Thomas Powell House
near the Entrance to Bethpage State Park
(Story page 105)

TABLE of CONTENTS

FLU WAS RAMPANT IN EARLY 1800's
THE STORY OF BETHPAGE STATE PARK
OLD TIME ROADS WERE BAD
SOME EARLY NICOLL'S
BRITISH OCCUPATION OF L. I.

Chester G. Osborne
Chester R. Blakelock
Kate W. Strong
John Tooker
Paul Bailey

LETTERS FROM FORUM READERS

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**THE
LONG ISLAND
FORUM**

Published Monthly at
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FOR LONG ISLANDERS EVERYWHERE

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PAUL BAILEY, Publisher-Editor

Contributing Editors: Dr. John C.
Huden, Julian Denton Smith,
Roy E. Lott, Chester G. Osborne.

Tappen's, Sheepshead Bay

As a Forum subscriber at the
west end, I would like to tell about
an old west end historic hostelry,
Tappen's. It was founded in 1845
at Sheepshead Bay in the old Town
of Gravesend by Jeremiah Tappen
and his wife Emma R. as a seafood
house. Jeremiah was connected
with the Tappen family of Jericho
and Tappen Town, of L. I. Quaker
extraction.

The establishment continued as
a seafood restaurant under the
original family direction until 1916
when it was taken over by George
C. Stephen, a direct nephew of
Jeremiah. The original policy of
serving seafood was continued un-
til 1948, when after being in the
family for over 100 years the prop-
erty was sold. In the early morn-
ing of May 1950 fire destroyed the
whole building and it has never
been rebuilt.

During its many years it was
the rendezvous of sportsmen from
the Sheepshead Bay, Brighton
Beach and Gravesend racetracks;
also prominent businessmen and
political celebrities such as Gov-
ernor Alfred E. Smith, Mayor Gay-
nor, Mayor Jimmy Walker and
others. Here Diamond Jim Brady,
Lillian Russell and other famous
stagefolk met to dine.

In its heyday Tappen's was
known from coast to coast and was
a favorite eating place for Long
Islanders, including, no doubt,
many Forum readers.

George C. Stephen
Manhasset

Corrections

In the May 1958 issue of the
Forum, I stated that the Chapel at
Huntington Harbor was given to
the Presbyterians; I should have
said the Episcopalians, and it was
Hiram Paulding, son of the Ad-
miral, who rang the bell.

Roy E. Lott

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Flu Was Rampant in Early 1800's

DURING the evening of December 18, 1819, an eleven-year old boy huddled over a table in the Dayton home at East Hampton to write a letter home. This would be his third or fourth letter since coming to Clinton Academy, he reflected. In June he had written that he was in good health, that the three dollar bill which his father William Smith had given him was not current, that he needed shoes, and that he did "not like East Hampton at all it is a loan-some place." In August he had indicated that he was still healthy, and that his blue pantaloons were too faded to wear, especially at this place.

He addressed his letter to his father at Mastic (the mail for the Manor of St. George was picked up at the Fire Place Postoffice nearby) and began as countless letters before and since have begun: with mention of his health; however mundane and repetitious the topic might be, it was still of basic and primary concern.

"I now take this little opportunity, to write you a few lines to let you know that I am in east-hampton, and that I am well except a very bad cold. I arrived at the City of Easthamton at about 8 o'clock on Sunday evening after a long & tedious voyage.

"I am now going very rapid through with geography and shall be through in three weeks at the lowest calculation and then if you have a mind that I should study surveying you can send me your apparatus; if not I will study Lattin.

"I have bought me a hat, geography, and a pair of spair day shoes and a pair of every day ones and two or three other things; that have taken away most of my money. but I shall have nothing more to buy this winter.

"I wish you would not forget them chesnuts, walnuts, and apples that you was going to send me. give my respects to all . . . I should be very much pleased to see you in easthamton this winter, but I hope you will come in a perty stylish way. I hope you will (overlook the faults of) this letter

Chester G. Osborne

for it is so dark that I can hardly see to write and my hand trembles very bad. I am your affectionate son.

William H. Smith"

Young William's father must have been uneasy at the last line; a hand which "trembles very bad" and a "very bad cold" together could mean a severe respiratory infection, perhaps flu, and the indications could be the more ominous when a boy would of his own accord write and admit it.

The father was nicknamed "Point Billy" by his neighbors to separate him from the other William Smiths; Point Billy (1777-1857) was the son of U. S. Senator John Smith, and perhaps the tenth in the immediate or nearly-related family to bear the name of their ancestor Colonel William "Tangier" Smith; his young son we have called "Indiana" Smith; it was something of a disappointment to Billy to have his son, after an extensive education, leave the ancestral Manor and go out west. In Madison, Indiana, young William set up a law practice and soon became a Judge. Point Billy was proud of that, but his son's letters

alarmed him: the lad seemed determined to stay there, and his health was not good.

Before Point Billy could get used to the idea that a William Smith of the Manor of St. George was indeed forsaking the place, Indiana Smith died of something diagnosed as consumption at the age of twenty-nine. He had medical care: he was bled from both arms! Perhaps he had tried some of the remedies then current: the newspaper "The Indiana Republican" which had advertised his law office also carried an announcement for "La Mott's Cough Drops, for Coughs, Consumption, Colds, Influenza, Whooping Cough, Spasmodic Asthma Pains in the Side, Difficulty of Breathing and Want of Sleep - - - 45 doses for \$1.00".

Looking back at the boy's letters, one wonders if the "consumption" developed from some such condition as his "very bad cold" and was encouraged by the primitive living accommodations then available to children at school and college. When one got a cold or influenza on early Long Island, the remedies were like those in Indiana; the "Suffolk Democrat" advertised "Ayer's Cherry Pectoral for the Rapid Cure of Coughs, Colds, Influenza, Hoarse-



Clinton Academy, East Hampton, Founded 1784
From Watercolor by Cyril A. Lewis

ness, Croup, Bronchitis, Incipient Consumption, and for the relief of Consumptive Patients in advanced stages of the disease".

The months from December to March seemed to be the dangerous ones for respiratory infections, but there were exceptions: in June, 1823, Point Billy wrote that "We are all well excepting John who has got the ague in his face something like the quinsy." That last word refers to quinsy, a severe inflammation of the throat, with fever and probably an accompanying tonsil infection.

The pattern of contagion shows itself in this excerpt, when Point Billy wrote to his daughter Lydia, January 31, 1825: "your mother is quite unwell and Egbert is sick with a Cold and all our Family have all got Colds . . ." In February of the next year, Billy wrote to Indiana Smith, "we have a complaint of Colds which is very Severe and has in some Cases proved Mortal. our Family have all got them now but I hope that the worst is over".

To his son Egbert Smith, one day to be a New York State Congressman, Point Billy wrote on March 5, some years after, "I hope that you will be careful of yourself and not go on the ice on account of falling through and . . . taking Cold. By all means be very Careful of yourself. Colds are now very common with us and Last Week the Scarlet Fever prevailed very bad at Patchogue and Bellport —Samuel Tucker has lost two children and several other deaths has been there . . . This disease comes on by taking cold. . . ." We would date this letter as 1833, but the corner is torn off and we cannot be certain.

Prevention was recognized as better than a cure even in 1839, when Billy wrote again to Egbert, warning him against traveling in bad weather, and adding, "it is very cold now and everyone had ought to be careful. A cold contracted now is very apt to last all the winter."

The winter of 1838-39 must have been a humdinger on Long Island: on January 28, 1839, Billy remarked that "This is a very cold day. Saturday night it rained with a most tremendous wind which has brought the ice on our dock about

Continued on page 108

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The Story of Bethpage State Park

THOMAS POWELL was an Englishman who didn't like "H's" and couldn't pronounce them anyway.

In 1695 he purchased from the Indian proprietors a large tract of land in the eastern part of what is now Nassau County and immediately sought an appropriate name for it. The lands were located on the road from Jericho, lying just to the north, to a place called Jerusalem, Long Island on the south. This fact recalled to him the story of Christ's entry into Jerusalem as related in the book of St. Matthew:

"and as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him, and when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem and were come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples."

Thomas Powell knew that "Bethphage" meant "house of figs" but in a broader sense he reasoned that it could also mean "land of fruit or plenty". He thereupon decided to use the Biblical name of Bethphage to designate his new holdings situated as they were on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem.

A word with two H's, however, was too much for Thomas Powell. He always referred to the area as "Bethpage", a name that has survived on Long Island for over 260 years with very few people knowing of its origin. The first Quakers on Long Island used it as the name of their Friends Meeting House established near Thomas Powell's home and the deed from the Indians to Powell, which is recorded in the Queens County Clerk's Office, has always been referred to by historians as the "Bethpage Purchase."

There is probably no other place or locality in the world that uses this unique name but it was not until after 1931 that it received any prominence or appeared on up-to-date maps of Long Island.

At that time the Long Island State Park Commission was seeking means of acquiring 1368 acres of land, partly in Nassau and partly

Chester R. Blakelock

*Executive Secretary
Long Island State Park Commission*

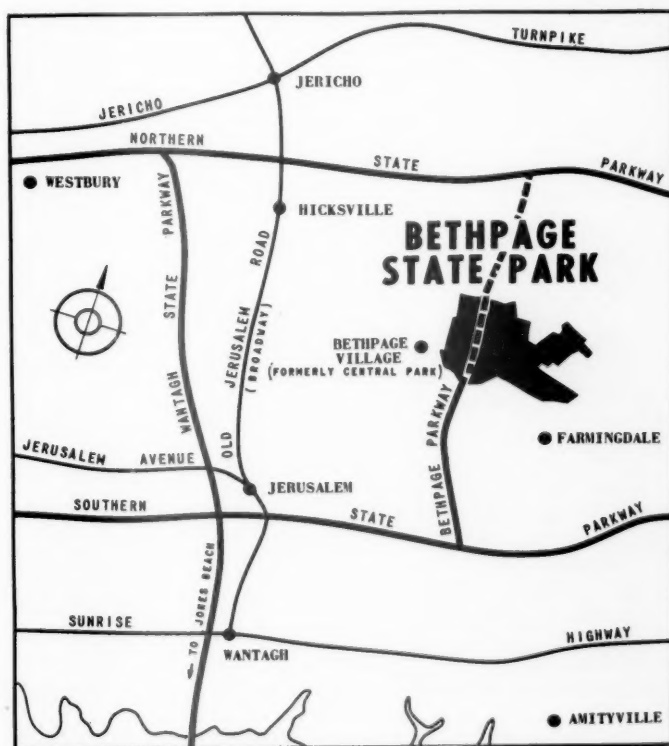
in Suffolk County, lying north of the village of Farmingdale and east of the Village of Central Park. These lands, which were part of the original Bethpage Purchase, were controlled by the heirs of Benjamin Yoakum, a Texas railway magnate who died in 1930. Jesse Merritt, Nassau County Historian and a direct descendant of Thomas Powell, suggested to Commissioner Moses that the land when acquired for park purposes be called "Bethpage State Park".

Commissioner Moses accepted the county historian's suggestion but the actual acquisition of the area for park purposes came about in as unusual a manner as did the establishing of its name in 1695.

The Yoakum tract was ideally situated for state park purposes. It was hilly, well wooded, had one

complete 18 hole golf course, another partially completed, and other advantages nowhere else available for developing a complete recreation center for golf, tennis, polo, riding, picnicking, baseball and in fact practically every form of recreation except swimming. The Yoakum heirs offered the property to the State for \$1,100,000 including improvements. This price of about \$850 an acre was considered reasonable but there were no funds available to the Commission to acquire the property or even to secure an option to hold it intact until funds could be raised.

With no possible means available to the State to acquire the property or to purchase an option to hold it, Commissioner Moses sought the aid of the local counties and towns which would be most benefited by the development of the area as a public park. A special act of the legislature was obtained authorizing counties and other local mu-



nicipalities in Nassau and Suffolk County to purchase options in aid of the State park and parkway program. Pursuant to this authorization, the Town of Oyster Bay and the County of Suffolk agreed to contribute \$20,000 and \$10,000 respectively to secure an option to hold the property for a term of one year, ending on June 21, 1932.

The one golf course on the property was being operated as a private club under the name of "Lenox Hills Country Club" which held a lease from the owners. The Country Club started an action against the park commission, the County of Suffolk and the Town of Oyster Bay seeking an injunction to prevent the sale of the property for park purposes on the grounds that the proposed sale violated the terms of their lease. The Club's motion for an injunction was denied by the Nassau County Supreme Court on November 6, 1931. This cleared the way for the Park Commission to take over the operation of the golf course under a lease from the owners.

A special non-profit corporation called the Bethpage Corporation was formed to operate the clubhouse and golf course which were opened to the public in the spring of 1932. All moneys collected by the Corporation were used for maintenance and operation with all balances devoted to making improvements.

In the meantime ways and means of financing the purchase of the land were being studied. The help

of numerous philanthropic organizations and foundations was solicited but because of the depression and other demands, no financial aid from these sources was available and it became necessary to extend the option for an additional year. This was done without cost and the Commission continued to operate the clubhouse and golf course throughout the year 1932. Large picnic areas were established and the riding stables, bridle paths and tennis courts were improved and opened for public use.

No means were found during the winter and spring of 1933 to purchase the property so for the third time an option was given for an additional year. The "park" became more and more popular with visitors and was now considered an important part of the Long Island state park system. No one seemed to realize how small the chances were that it would long remain in the park system.

During the summer of 1933 Governor Lehman called a special session of the legislature to consider legislation for relieving unemployment. Among the measures submitted to this special session by Commissioner Moses was a proposed act to establish a public benefit corporation to be known as the "Bethpage Park Authority", to consist of the members of the Long Island State Park Commission with powers to issue bonds for the acquisition, improvement and operation of Bethpage State

Park. This act was passed by the Legislature and became Chapter 801 of the Laws of 1933 after the signature of the Governor was affixed on August 26, 1933.

Application was immediately made to the Reconstruction Finance

Continued on page 112

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Old Time Roads Were Bad

WHEN young people grumble about the state of the roads in the spring, they little know what winter roads were like 60 or 70 years ago. People worked out their road taxes in those days . . . so many days' labor for a man, or less days if he had a team. If anyone didn't want to work out their taxes, they could pay the roadmaster for their time. I imagine it was probably a dollar a day earlier, but when I first remember, it was \$1.50 for a farm hand who worked from 7 A.M. to 6 P.M. (They did get \$2 a day during haying.) They always walked to work.

Farmers were always busy in the spring, so made roads in the fall. Their pet way was to plow up the road, smooth it up, and turnpike it . . . i.e. round up in the middle. On the hills they made ridges to turn off the water. In most places I believe these were called "thank-you ma'ams", but here they usually called them "wake-ups". All went well until there was a deep freeze and then a thaw. Then the road became a river of mud that ran back after every passing wagon, leaving no trace behind. When it froze, you felt as though the wagon was being torn to pieces, to say nothing of the shaking you got.

Of course icy roads were very difficult in winter, especially if you had a smooth horse, i.e. a horse without sharp shoes. Taking a horse in that condition to the blacksmith was often nervous business. I remember starting out one day with old black Billy to go to Mr. West's shop in East Setauket (That shop is now over at the Carriage Museum in Stony Brook.) All went well till I got nearly opposite the new school when the road was so icy I had to turn into the broad left hand gutter where I started to lead the horse.

When I reached Brewster's hill (now 25A), I stopped to make sure there was nothing coming, but I had to take a zigzag course across the road to avoid patches of ice. To my horror, a very drunken man came up and seized the bridle on the other side, an-

Kate W. Strong

nouncing he would take the horse right across the road, which meant going on a patch of ice. We must have made a funny sight . . . he on one side of the horse's head trying to pull him forward, and I on the other side trying to hold him back. Fortunately, a man passing by came to the rescue and announced he thought he could singly take the horse across. So a very reluctant drunken man and a very rejoiced young woman let go their hold and Billy was led across in safety.

I always enjoyed going to the shop and watching Mr. West carefully fit the shoes, with their sharpened heels and toe pieces, to the horses' feet, after paring the hooves down. It was a strange thing that a horse that had timidly crawled down to the shop would take to the road again with absolute confidence—in fact my mare once bolted with me and I had to drive for some miles before I dared turn toward home, as she was pulling badly.

The first attempt at hard roads around here was putting on a thick layer of unbroken oyster shells, leaving the wagons and horses to crush them down. That was for a short distance in East Setauket. It made a hard road but they never

tried it again. I guess they were afraid the horses' feet might get cut.

When gravel was first used on the roads, they unloaded the gravel at Strongs Neck Bridge. One careless barge captain let his barge slip a little way under the bridge at low tide, and when it rose the bridge rose also on that side. Automobiles did go across, but it looked pretty tippy. Finally he got it down on the piles and all seemed well.

One day in the following winter I was coming home in the cutter. The only snow on the bridge was close to the rail on that side. Suddenly the bridge began to sway. I went on very slowly, then tied my horse and went back on the shore to see what had happened. Ice had carried away every one of those loosened piles. So we had to 'go 'round', as we all called going by Dykes Road, for some time while the bridge was being repaired. In those days it was a single track road very full of holes. Such were some of the problems of winters past.

You have a most interesting and unique publication, of great interest to old Long Island families, and I am delighted to know about it. Harold C. Patterson, New York.



South Country Road in the 1890's

Continued from page 104

ten feet high . . . it is now so Extremely cold that it can't snow."

Billy continues - - - the person he mentions as "little Primus" we would guess to be one of the servant's children - - - "I myself have had a pretty bad cold . . . our Servants have been complaining, and little Primus has been so unwell that we have found it necessary to keep him in our own room nights and had Doctor Gurgury (Gregory?) to visit him but has now got well."

But the flu was the infection which weakened everyone in its own inimitable way: a letter in March, 1829 says "I am so unwell that I cannot leave my room with the influenza." And in December, 1849, Lydia wrote from Greenport, "We have all had an attack of influenza - - - & I have not got rid of my cough yet tho well in other respects . . ."

Thompson's Station

Thompson's Station, which was on the main line of the LIRR just west of Brentwood, was named for the Thompson family, the owners of Sagtikos Manor on Montauk highway, West Islip, during the Revolution and for some years thereafter. (In reply to query).

We enjoy the many interesting articles and pictures in the Forum. Mrs. L. S. Jennings, West Islip.

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Liked Forum Pamphlet

I have received the pamphlet "Long Island's First Italian, 1939" which you have been kind enough to send me.

I have found this publication very interesting and I appreciate your thoughtfulness in letting me have a copy.

With renewed thanks and best regards, I remain

Very truly yours,

Carlo de Ferrariis Salzano
The Consul General of Italy
New York

Note: The above pamphlet by the late Judge Berne A. Pyrke of Albany was published by the Forum in 1943.

Agency's 101st Year

East Norwich's insurance firm, Richard Downing & Sons, was founded in 1857 by George S. Downing, sheriff of Queens County and treasurer of the old Glen Cove Mutual. The founder's great-grandson, Walter P. Downing, now heads the firm.

L. I. FORUM INDEX

The Queens Borough Public Library, 89-14 Parsons Blvd., Jamaica, sells a complete index of the Long Island Forum for the years 1938-1947 inclusive, at \$1 postpaid. Also for the years 1948-1952 inclusive, at 50 cents postpaid. They were compiled by Miss Marguerite V. Doggett, Librarian L. I. Collection, and may be obtained by addressing her at the Library.

Visitors Welcome

The General Museum-Library of the Suffolk County Historical Society, at Riverhead, is open daily (except Sundays and Holidays) from one to five P. M.

Visitors always welcome (no charge) at this educational institution where items connected with Long Island's history, culture and natural sciences are on display.

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British Occupation of Long Island

THE American Revolution exacted a high toll from Long Island. Although the earliest fighting of the war in the spring of 1775 centered around Boston, Long Islanders by then had long been engaged in openly opposing British misrule. Six weeks before the so-called Boston Massacre of March 5, 1770, local Sons of Liberty had been fired upon by Britain's 16th Regulars during a demonstration in John street, Manhattan, and one patriot had been mortally wounded. This area had its own "Boston Tea Party" on April 22, 1774, when local patriots boarded the British ship *London* in New York harbor and tossed eighteen chests of tea overboard. Like the Boston affair, it hastened the repeal of the British colonial tax on tea.

During this same year of 1774 Long Islanders set up committees of correspondence to aid in the co-ordination of resistance throughout the colonies. At the same time local royalists took steps to obstruct the work of these committees and thus was broadened the breach between these so-called Tories and their Whig neighbors.

Suffolk County's Committees of Correspondence, convening at Riverhead November 15, 1774, voted to recommend "to the several towns in this county to set forward a subscription for the employment and relief of the distressed poor in the town of Boston, to be collected in such manner as the committees in each town shall judge proper, to be in readiness to be forwarded early next spring. * * * That John Foster have the care of procuring a vessel to call at the several harbors in this county to receive and carry the above donations to Boston. * * * That we fully approve of the proceedings of the late Continental Congress, and recommend it to the communities of the different towns to see that the association by them entered into on behalf of themselves and their constituents be strictly observed." The resolution was signed by Ezra L'Hommedieu as clerk.

During the first months of 1775 as open warfare became more im-

Paul Bailey

minent in the vicinity of Boston, although many Long Islanders strove to remain neutral and others took an open stand of loyalty to the crown, the great majority gave equally open support to the revolutionary movement. Delegations representing the towns of Huntington, Smithtown, Islip, Southampton and Brookhaven met at Smithtown February 23, 1775, and adopted resolutions of approval of the Continental Congress, advising their representatives in the newly formed Colonial Assembly to participate in the naming of delegates to the Continental Congress to convene at Philadelphia in May. Later, however, a provincial convention was called to name these delegates.

At Riverhead on April 6, 1775, the various town committees named as Suffolk County's delegates to this convention Col. William Floyd, Col. Nathaniel Woodhull, Col. Phineas Fanning, Thomas Tredwell and John Sloss Hobart.

Following final adjournment of the Colonial Assembly on April 4, two days before the Riverhead meeting, a New York Provincial Congress convened May 22 and set up a provisional government of town and county committees to

carry on, pending the organization of a state government in 1777. Suffolk's members of the Provincial Congress were, besides Woodhull, Hobart, and Tredwell, named above, John Foster, Ezra L'Hommedieu, Thomas Wickham, James Havens and Selah Strong. The second Provincial Congress convened December 6, 1775, and the third on May 24 of the following year, in both of which sessions Long Islanders played important roles.

In Hempstead town, however, the Tory element controlled local affairs sufficiently to forestall the election of delegates, which led north shore residents of the town to meet separately and elect their own representatives. They were Benjamin and Simeon Sands, Adrian and Peter Onderdonk, John and William Cornwell, W. D. Kissam, John Farmer, Martin Schenck and Thomas Dodge.

Shortly thereafter Hempstead town's north shore citizens again convened and adopted a declaration of independence from the town as follows:

"At a meeting of us, the free-men, freeholders and other inhabitants of Great Neck, Cow Neck and all such as lately belonged to

Continued on Page 114



Raynham Hall, Oyster Bay, of Revolution Fame
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Some Early Nicoll's

Billy Nicoll, the principal character in Chester G. Osborne's interesting story of "Billy Nicoll and The Chain", in the April Forum, was the grandson of William Nicoll, the Patentee, and the son of Benjamin Nicoll and Charity Floyd. Billy was born at Islip October 7, 1715. His mother was the daughter of Richard Floyd Sr. of Setauket and Margaret Nicoll, only sister of The Patentee. She had three children by her marriage to Benjamin Nicoll, two sons, William and Benjamin, and a daughter Gloriana Margareta. Benjamin died in 1723 or 1724 and his widow Charity in 1725 married Rev. Samuel Johnson, first Episcopal minister of Stratford, Conn., and first president of Kings College (now Columbia). Two sons were born of that marriage. Charity Johnson died in 1758 and was buried under the chancel of Trinity Church in New York. Her daughter Gloriana Nicoll who died a year later, was buried beside her.

Rev. Samuel Johnson prepared the two sons of Benjamin Nicoll for Yale College from which William graduated in 1734 and was still listed as a member of Rev. Johnson's household in 1741. The daughter of Benjamin Nicoll had married Paul Maverick but was a widow at the time of her death in 1759. About 1753 William Nicoll was living at Setauket, probably on the land of his grandfather William Nicoll. By 1756 he was settled on the Islip estate where he died March 1, 1780, aged 64 years. His wife Joanna De Honeur, whom he married June 1, 1750, died in 1772 after a long and painful illness.

William (Billy) Nicoll, a lawyer, had been Clerk of Suffolk County for several years. He was known as Lawyer or Clerk Nicoll, and was often called on to settle boundary disputes. The dispute Mr. Osborne refers to in his fine story was the running of the east line of the Nicoll Patent in 1748. On other occasions Billy was associated with his cousin John Watts, son of Robert Watts of Scotland who had married Mary Nicoll, daughter of William Nicoll, The Patentee.

In 1768 Sir Henry Moore, Colonial Governor of New York from 1765 to 1770, appointed Billy Nicoll and John Watts commissioners to survey the boundary between Kings

Continued on next page

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and Queens Counties, particularly that portion between the townships of Newtown and Bushwick, which had been in dispute since the time of Governor Stuyvesant. Francis Marschall, who was engaged as surveyor, completed the survey on January 7, 1769. In 1774 Nicoll, Watts, Smith and Livingston were appointed commissioners to settle the boundary between New York and Massachusetts and their decision was accepted by the governors of the two Provinces.

John Tooker, Babylon.

"The Island", Robert Payne

Numerous books, pamphlets and articles have been written about Gardiner's Island, at the east end of Long Island, but it remained for Robert Payne, in his recent book, "The Island", to present most vividly its history and that of the family that has owned it for more than 300 years. "There is no other island quite like it off the coast of America," he writes, and "once you step ashore, you seem to have entered another age, richer than our own."

Acquired by Lion Gardiner in 1639 by royal grant, under fifteen successive lords of the manor, the island, as well as the Gardiner dynasty itself, has had its ups and downs, due, as the author shows, mostly to the varied character of the progenitor's descendants. No Gardiner has ever lived on the island without feeling its effects. As was Lion Gardiner, who fought but still befriended the Indians, the island has always been robustly dominant to those who made it their home.

From time to time the Forum has told about the Gardiners—of Lion, the grantee, who did more than any other man to preserve peace between the Indians and white inhabitants of the east end; of John Lyon, the gentleman farmer and studious agriculturist; of Julia, who married President John Tyler, and of other outstanding members of the family. But Mr. Payne, after careful research and with the aid of the present proprietor, Robert David Lion Gardiner, "16th Lord of the Manor", has presented the entire story of the family and its island, and done it superbly.

The 248-page illustrated volume published by Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, and sold at \$4.95, may be purchased through the Forum.

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Continued From Page 106

Corporation requesting the purchase of Authority bonds on the basis of a self-liquidating project. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation at that time flooded with requests for loans, refused to consider the project because too large a part of the requested loan was needed for the acquisition of land in comparison with the amount for construction which would require the use of unemployed labor. It was indicated at Washington that construction funds would be available through the Civil Works Administration for a project of this kind if public ownership of the land could be obtained.

The owners of the property agreed to accept \$100,000 cash and \$900,000 in Park Authority bonds secured by a mortgage and revenues from the operation of the park. This total amount of cash and bonds was considerably less than the original option price. The State Comptroller purchased \$100,000 in bonds which made available the necessary cash and title was finally closed on May 18, 1934. It was remarked after the closing that "Mr. Moses had pulled another rabbit out of the hat" which pretty well summed up the thoughts of most of the officials concerned with the problem of acquiring the park for nearly four years and who had come to believe that it would take a miracle to solve it.

Work on the construction of a

new clubhouse, three additional golf courses, polo field and other improvements was progressed during 1934 and 1935 as a Work Relief Project. At the peak of this construction 1800 men were taken from the relief rolls and given employment. In addition an idle furniture factory was taken over and with work relief men all the furniture for the new clubhouse was made.

The clubhouse and three of the four 18-hole golf courses were opened to the public on August 10, 1935. The fourth golf course was opened the following spring. This building is an outstanding example of a 100% work relief project, properly planned and supervised. The four golf courses constructed as work relief projects were designed and constructed under the direction of Joseph H. Burbeck, the Superintendent of the park, with A. W. Tillinghast, internationally known golf architect, as consultant. The four courses are designated as the Blue Course, 6,695 yards; the Red Course, 6,468 yards; the Green Course, 6,242 yards; and the Black Course, 6,783 yards; a fifth course, making a total of 90 holes, was completed for opening on May 30, 1958. The latest course, known as the yellow course, was designed by Alfred H. Tull and is 6,228 yards in length.

The Black Course, also known as the Championship Course, is the

most difficult. All courses are hilly and tricky but all have their own distinctive features. It is a far from settled question which one is the easiest but even the "pros" agree that the Black Course is one of the toughest in the country. Among the prominent golf professionals who have played in exhibition matches at Bethpage are Gene Sarazen, Jimmy Hines, Lawson Little, Paul Runyon, Sammy Snead, Horton Smith, Craig Wood, Jimmy Thompson, Willie Klein, Byron Nelson and Al Brosch, a former Bethpage Pro who started his golfing career as a caddy for B. F. Yoakum.

Bethpage State Park is an all-year round park. When snow conditions and cold weather make golfing impossible, the park attracts thousands of winter sports enthusiasts.

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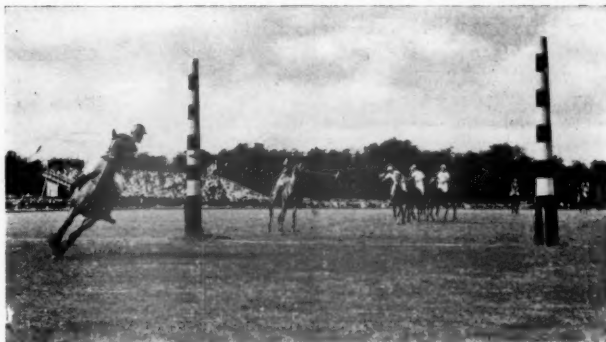
In 1942 a new outdoor stadium was added to the recreation facilities at Bethpage State Park. One of the purposes of the stadium is to provide an athletic field near the clubhouse for the playing of softball and other games by outing groups, but in addition organized semi-professional baseball and football games are played here.

In connection with the construction of the new Yellow Course, the picnic area was relocated and a new modern refreshment building and comfort station provided.

Even with a variety of sports facilities available in this park it is expected that golf will always remain as the most prominent feature. More than 200,000 rounds of golf are played each year with single days sometimes reaching as high as 1600 players. Other sports rise and fall in public favor but golf, which was first played 400 years ago in Holland and for a

long time considered only a wealthy man's game is now firmly established as a popular form of recreation for all. Even the constant bombing of England during World War II did not dampen enthusiasm for the game in that country as is evidenced by the following quotation from a letter received from a former Bethpage golfer who was in London at the time:

"I've seen no bomb craters that I've studied as anxiously as I have that bunker guarding number 2 of the Black Course. They do come bigger. When the ruins are cleared away plenty of them look more like the 3rd hole from tee to green. Day before yesterday I played golf—about my 10th game over here—and twice nicked the clubhead on jagged fragments of antiaircraft shells. It's to guard against these



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—averaging the size of your finger—that people are supposed to wear tin hats. My first games on this course were embellished by a couple of unexploded bombs sticking in fairways. Walking past these is sort of like edging past a vicious dog who doesn't know whether to bite you or let you go. It's permissible to lift out of a crater without penalty—but not nearer the hole. Most craters are small—not bigger than an upright piano on end."

From the revenues derived from the operation of the golf courses, tennis courts, riding stables, winter sports and other facilities, Bethpage State Park is entirely self supporting. All costs of maintenance and operation, payments of interest on outstanding bonds and the regular retirement of bonds is going forward. These bonds are now owned by the State of New York, having been purchased from the original owners by the State Comptroller as an investment for State funds.

Although Bethpage State Park is officially recognized as one of Long Island's fourteen state parks, actual title to the area will not rest in the State of New York until all bonds have been retired. This status, however, is only technical and the name "Bethpage" which had almost been lost through the two and a half centuries since the time of Thomas Powell is now preserved for all time because of Bethpage State Park.

Continued from page 109

the company of Captain Stephen Thorne in Queens County being duly warned, on Saturday, Sept. 23, 1775, and taking into our serious consideration our distressed and calamitous situation, and being convinced of our total inability to pur-

sue proper measures for our common safety which we in all cases are considered as a part of the township of Hempstead, and being conscious that self preservation, the immutable law of nature, is indispensable, do therefore

"Resolve, That during the present controversy or so long as their general conduct is inimical to freedom, we be no further considered as a part of the Township of Hempstead that is consistent with peace, liberty and safety; therefore in all matters relative to the Congressional plan we shall consider ourselves as an entire separate and independent beat or district. (Signed) John Farmer, Clerk."

Two weeks later, the militia in that area selected its own officers: John Sands, captain; Henry Allen and Thomas Mitchell, lieutenants, and Aspinwall Cornell, ensign. With Congressional approval, the area henceforth acted independently of the town throughout the war and on April 6, 1784 the State Legislature divided the original town into the towns of North and South Hempstead, the latter eventually becoming Hempstead town.

Hempstead, however, was not the only Long Island town with a strong Tory element during the early days of the war. When the war broke out at Concord in Massachusetts on April 19, 1775, Kings and Queens County Tories staged numerous demonstrations in denunciation of the Provincial Congress, the Continental Congress and the revolution generally. When on June 15, 1775, two days before the battle of Bunker Hill, the Continental Congress named George Washington commander-in-chief, local Whigs, with and without Congressional authority, organized posses to move against their Tory

neighbors, many of whom sought refuge in the Hempstead, Massapequa and other swamps.

One task that confronted the island's militia and its rapidly organizing companies of Minute Men was to protect from British raiders the thousands of cattle pasturing on Montauk and the Hempstead plains. The summer of 1775 brought several British vessels to east end waters where their raiding parties managed to carry off some cattle. Petitioned by the towns of East Hampton and Southampton for assistance, Congress sent four companies from General Wooster's command at Harlem and voted two hundred pounds of powder to be sent to Ezra L'Hommedieu and John Foster for use of the county's militia which then numbered about two thousand men.

John Hulbert of Bridgehampton became captain of a local company

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stationed at Montauk. When they found the cattle there adequately guarded, the British turned their attention to Gardiner's and Fisher's Islands where they are said to have taken about one hundred cattle and three thousand sheep. Hulbert's company later marched to Ticonderoga and from there was detailed to transfer prisoners of war to Philadelphia. There is no basis, however, for the story that it was this company's homemade flag that Betsy Ross used to design the first official stars and stripes.

When in October 1775 Colonial Governor William Tryon took refuge on a British ship in New York harbor and the Provincial Congress assumed the reign of local government, the war came closer to Long Island. Congress ordered the arrest of active Tories, and civilian Whigs joined with the militia in carrying out the order.

During the spring of 1776, with General William Howe's redcoats bottled up in Boston by 20,000 American troops, the British fleet under his brother, Lord Richard Howe, using Boston harbor as its base, played havoc with American shipping along the coast. One British squadron took over Gardiner's Bay at the east end of the island, thus blockading the outer end of the Sound and dominating eastern Suffolk County.

The evacuation of Boston by the British on St. Patrick's day, 1776, came as good news to Long Islanders. Shortly thereafter, however, it became evident that the British, who were supposed to be withdrawing to Halifax in Nova Scotia, were actually planning an invasion of Long Island. British ships were sighted off Port Jefferson, Huntington and other north shore points and a fleet of eight British ships-of-war hove to off

Orient in Southold town.

The adoption of the Declaration of Independence by the Continental Congress at Philadelphia on July 4, 1776, news of which reached Long Island five days later, left no doubt in the minds of local people that a decisive war was in progress. The one native Long Islander who, as a member of Congress, signed this historic document was General William Floyd of Mastic. He was one of four New Yorkers who did so, the others being Philip Livingston of Brooklyn, Francis Lewis of Whitestone and Lewis Morris of the Bronx.

There is no doubt that a prime objective of the British at this stage of the war was to seize Long Island's livestock which, according to a contemporary official estimate, numbered at least 100,000 cattle and an even greater number of sheep. General Washington recognized the importance of keeping this great meat supply from the enemy's hands and agreed to purchase the livestock for use of the Continental army if it could be transferred to the mainland.

The Provincial Congress thereupon drafted one-quarter of the island's military force to drive the animals to the north shore for removal to Connecticut. General Nathaniel Woodhull of Mastic was placed in charge of this detachment, with Lieutenant Colonel Gilbert Potter of Huntington second in command. Before the task got fairly under way, however, the British invasion of the island began on August 22 and the battle of Long Island followed.

Countless chapters and entire books have been devoted to this first strategic engagement of the Revolution and the first instance in American history in which all the colonies united to oppose a common foreign foe. The British force of 31,000 men, supported by a squadron of 400 vessels, having gained a foothold in south Brooklyn by way of Staten Island, opened the battle on August 27. The American army consisted of 28,500 of which only about 19,000 were rated as effective. Long breast-

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works had been erected by Washington's men but proved ineffectual against the British assaults as did the untrained troops behind them. Two successful flanking movements by the British insured the defeat of the American army and might well have resulted in its annihilation but for a strategic withdrawal across the East River to Manhattan on the night of August 29.

"This retreat," declares the historian Fiske, "has always been regarded as one of the most brilliant incidents of Washington's career". Trevelyan, English chronicler of the Revolution, wrote: "It may be doubted whether any great national deliverance since the passage of the Red Sea has ever been more loudly acclaimed or more adequately celebrated than the master-stroke of energy, dexterity and caution by which Washington rescued his army and his country."

The movement was made under the cover of darkness with the enemy within musket shot of Washington's beaten army which, cornered on Brooklyn Heights, had no alternative but to surrender or be destroyed. Every available craft, from scows to whaleboats and small sailboats, was pressed into service in crossing the river, which was accomplished without the knowledge of the enemy or the loss of a single man. Certainly this strategic withdrawal alone made possible a continuation of the war.

As it was, many Long Islanders and other Americans fell in the engagement, but more were taken prisoners and confined on Britain's prison-ships anchored off the west end of the island. A large portion of these prisoners eventually died from wounds or sickness but some escaped to rejoin the Continental army and fight again. One prom-

inent Long Islander who was captured and died from wounds was General Nathaniel Woodhull of Mastic.

Following Washington's withdrawal, the enemy occupied the entire island, forcing more than 1100 known patriots to take refuge in Connecticut and other areas not held by the British. A similar condition resulted in New York City when it fell to the enemy and which, like Long Island, served as a British base until peace was declared seven years later.

During those years Long Island and adjacent waters were rife with guerrilla activities as refugees sojourning in Connecticut joined New Englanders in numerous expeditions to attack the island's occupational forces and their Tory allies. History has called it whaleboat warfare as the whalers' 30-foot cedar boats equipped with sails as well as oars and built for speed and seaworthiness, were frequently used.

As carried on here, this whaleboat warfare served the American cause quite as effectively as did American privateers, a number of which were likewise provided and manned by Long Islanders. As the war progressed, however, the whaleboat came to be used as well

by lawless elements engaged in illicit trade. This trade extended all along the east coast with British-held Long Island in the centre. Those engaged in the trade victimized British and Americans alike. They acquired goods from either side, by purchase if necessary, but by theft and piracy in most cases. Fortunately for those whaleboatmen who were engaged in legitimate warfare, their expeditions were commissioned. Otherwise history would have found it much more difficult to separate the

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wheat from the chaff in the whaleboat activities carried on in Long Island waters during the Revolution.

Shortly after the disastrous battle of Long Island the British occupied the island and remained here as in New York City throughout the seven-year conflict. Civil government was suspended and local committees as well as the local militia were dissolved. Private, church and public property was appropriated by the army of occupation in many quarters. British posts and forts were established in various communities. Sag Harbor became a British port. British General William Erskine made his headquarters at Southampton. Forts, barracks and posts were maintained at Hempstead, Oyster Bay, Huntington, Setauket and other points.

To tell the complete story of the Revolution on Long Island would fill a large volume. Several have been written about its whaleboat warfare; others about the spy system which patriotic Long Islanders organized and maintained throughout the war. Few parts of the country suffered more than the island from privation and hardship. The end of the war and the departure of British troops in 1783 left the island in such condition that it took years to recover.

Bull's Head

We learn from Mrs. K. W. Reeve of Bridgehampton, once called Bull's Head, that the sign of the old Bull's Head Tavern, which stood in that village in early times, is preserved at Mindern, Bridgehampton.

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In New York she enrolled at Traphagen because she wanted to learn the ways of the American trade. Miss Tasche has already realized that ambition. When she finished her courses, the school's free Employment Bureau immediately placed her in her first job, which she soon outgrew. She is now happily and successfully designing clothes in New York's



those interested in fashion — and what woman is not! — the Traphagen School of Fashion extends an invitation to attend this exhibit which will take place June 7 through 21 in the school's galleries at 1680 Broadway (52nd St.), New York. Work from the Art Department will include not only design, but examples of fashion illustration in a variety of methods and media; actual garments created in the Clothing Construction Department will be shown; and the Department of Interior Decoration and Display will be represented by its students' work. All in all, it will be a graphic presentation of the preparation for careers.

Long Ago Boat Ride

As I was reading my April Forum and saw the boats, it set me to thinking of former days.

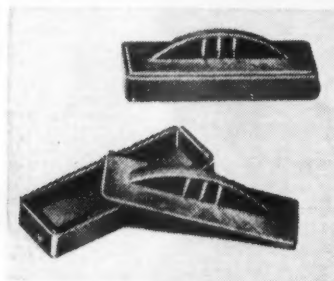
Now I remember my uncle Charlie Beecher Tuttle used to be the cook on the steamer Huntington which ran between that village and New York. I was only a young girl and we didn't get far from home then, but I did go to New York once on that big boat. What a thrill it was.

Charlie B. did not get home to Eastport too often but when he did he rode his bicycle over to our house to stop overnight. What a thrill it was to have him around.

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great garment center. Seen here below the photograph of Miss Tasche are a dress and bulky jacket, the clothes with a casual air she likes best to do.

Many original designs by current students will be on view in the school's Annual Exhibition. To

275th Anniversary

Suffolk County celebrated its 250th anniversary in November 1933 with a huge celebration at Riverhead. Why not a 275th anniversary during this year of 1958. N.O.P.

"The Island"

By Robert Payne, M. A.

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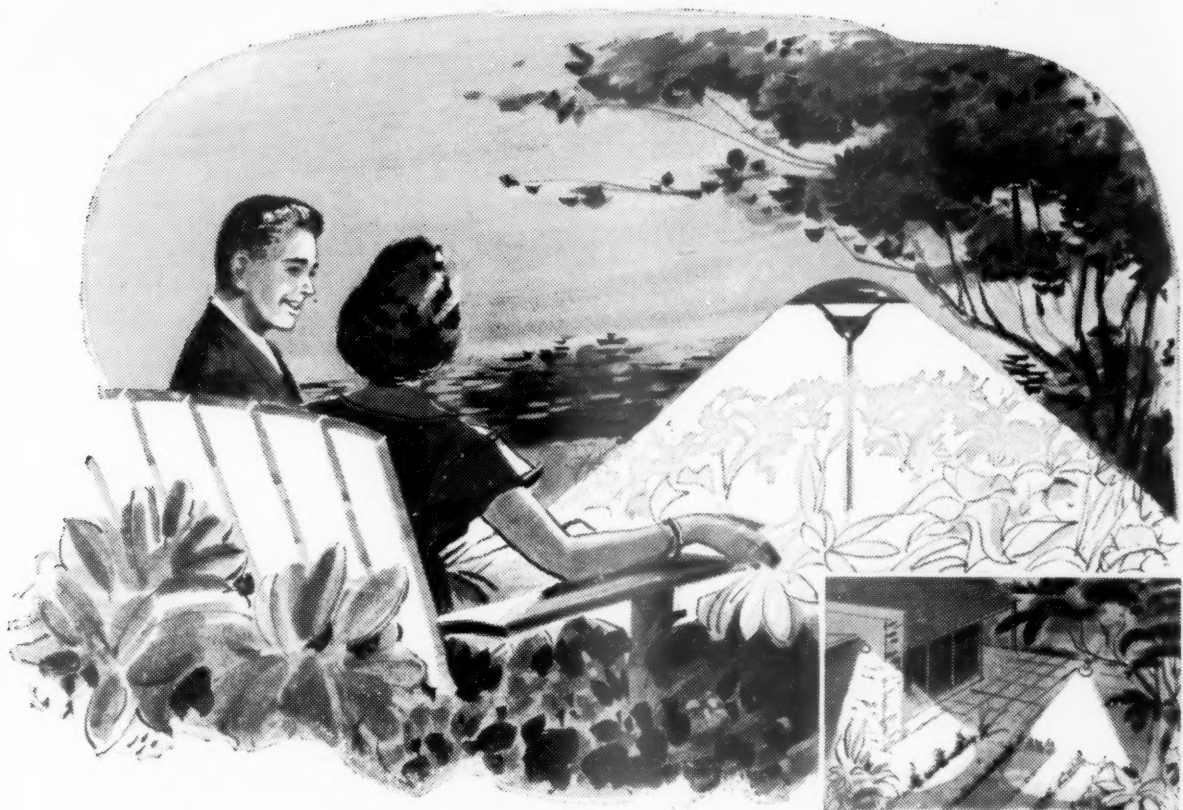
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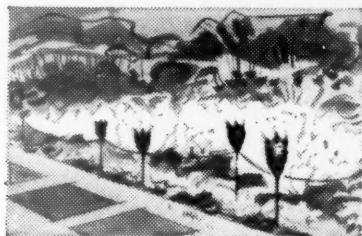
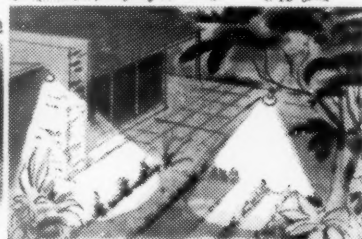
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Wading River Drowning

In reference to a recent letter in the Forum, there is no quicksand in Wading River creek. I've been over every inch of it many times. There is, way up at the head, very soft mud that gives the appearance of "bottomlessness". I believe the letter referred to the drowning of a nurse and girl prior to 1900. Fright, not tide nor quicksand, was the cause. Also both were probably poor swimmers. There is a strong current when the tide ebbs. One of the bodies was carried some miles offshore in the sound and was picked up by Capt. Ed Tuthill who knew the currents.

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